

NURSING IN MISSION STATIONS

MISS EMMA H. HIGGINS, R. N., of the American Church Mission in Wuchang, China, writes of her work in the Elizabeth Bunn Memorial Hospital:

Two years have been spent in studying Chinese, preparing to teach the pupil nurses in their own language. Our school will not be open before Christmas. The Wesleyan Mission has a very good training school and their experience has been most encouraging. Their nurses are much liked by the doctors and foreigners for whom they nurse, they are gentle, capable, and exact, making very good private nurses. All they need is some one to train them thoroughly. The Chinese young women are just beginning to appreciate the opening which gives them independence, but doctors and nurses are very few, they come out slowly, and for lack of these, hospitals cannot be opened and work does not enlarge. It is an intensely interesting field and a work that will go on long after we are dead, along with the schools of western medicine which are opening. It is quite worth the sacrifice of leaving home. There is no other sacrifice, for we have houses, food and clothes, just as at home. The climate of this Yantstse Valley is not bad, with reasonable care and a willingness to take advice. During the hottest and worst months of the summer, July and August, we have two months in the mountains.

This is not a plea for nurses for our own Episcopal Mission alone. Every denomination is calling for nurses for its mission stations, but we want those who can teach others to nurse, so that the Chinese nurses will be started right, ready for the time when they decide to depend on themselves instead of on the foreigner.

Readers of this department will be interested in seeing among the marriage announcements on another page, that of Miss Maddock, of Wuhu, China, to Dr. Hart, of the same place, whose assistant she has been and will continue to be.

Our most recent news from Wuhu is as follows:

The idea of training boys as nurses is growing popular and we can choose much better now. Two days ago a youth appeared asking to be trained. He gave his age as twenty-five, on being told that he was too old he shifted to seventeen. This brought a decidedly negative reply, as we told him there was no room for prevaricators. Nothing daunted he returned yesterday with a huge red and white envelope enclosing a letter from a former minister to the United States from China. He discovered to his regret that influence does not weigh against honesty.

The water problem is a constant one here, and probably the tea habit saves millions of lives every year, as it insures the boiling of water. A missionary

friend telling her children the story of Ishmael and Hagar tried to make the finding of the spring the climax. It fell on unsympathetic ears however, as the little ones suspecting this to be but the irony of fate exclaimed, "But they had no filter."

Our most pressing need is the fitting out of a laboratory for Doctor Houghton to carry on bacteriological work. That there is a vast unworked field here, medical men at home thoroughly realize. The cause and prevention and cure of many of the dreaded oriental diseases is to be discovered very largely in the mission hospital laboratory. The Panama Canal zone has been robbed very largely of its terrors by the man with the microscope. Who can say what the bacteriologist will do for China's, and because of our intimacy, for America's safety? Five hundred dollars invested in scientific research may reap an incalculable harvest.

From a personal letter received from Miss Whitely, who is stationed at Porto Rico in a Presbyterian Mission Hospital, we make the following extracts of general interest:

It is not necessary to tell you that a hospital is a busy place; it is always so here, and there are difficulties to contend with that are a little different from those in hospitals at home. The lack of perseverance and ambition are two of them, found in both nurses and servants. I have just returned from a two weeks' tour of the island and after seeing some of the homes of these two classes of people, I marvel that they are ever trained to be anything.

There are three American nurses here. Miss Ordway, the superintendent, has taught in mission schools on the island and in Mexico, so she is well acquainted with the language and characteristics of the people, which it not only a great help to her but to the rest of us. We have only one text-book in Spanish and that is an anatomy and physiology. It is difficult to get many desirable applicants for the school. Some are unable to take any sort of a course, for they lack even ordinary intelligence, others have proved morally unfit. At present the class is more promising. Although the students are sometimes unreliable and very exasperating, one cannot help growing fond of them, for they are very kind and affectionate as well as high strung and passionate. One of the nurses finished a two year' course in July and another will come to the end of her time in January. After that there will be a long period before another class will go. They have never had any examinations or anything made of their graduation, so later we are going to have a little reception that the others may have something to look forward to.

All speak Spanish except two, so the work has not been easy, trying to teach them with the little Spanish we have acquired and with a poor interpreter.



"No marvel Christmas lives so long;
He never knew but merry hours."